Dear Eric & PBID Board:

This afternoon (Sunday May 15) as a street fight broke out right in front of Porky's during our quarterly Contra Dance with our out-of-town new-to-San-Pedro visitors and guests, I was strongly reminded of a thought I had at the PBID Board meeting last week: As the HIN-damning comments (there was no 'discussion', just straight ahead damning and slamming) proceeded, my thought was "wow these guys either have no idea what is actually happening on 6th St, or they are in denial, or feeling helpless about it". My theory is that, as with 95% of San Pedrans, they almost never come downtown, particularly after dusk and never after the dinner hour; so they do not see what is actually happening on 6th St. More on this topic at a later date.

I. April Meeting Prior to May PBID Board Meeting

A. "Events" Rational Decision Making

After the end of the April PBID meeting I was in conversation with one of the board members about some of the discussion that had occurred in relation to the Marketing Committee and missions and goals for the work of that committee. We both agreed that "events" were the best way to promote Downtown San Pedro.

Since there was to be no Marketing Committee meeting during April, and since "events" are so valuable, and the Marketing Committee was heading for a more managerial and strategic approach (away from the casual-chat format) I had begun to develop some decision-making tools for evaluating potential events, moving from the horseback approach to a more thoughtful decision-making format.

In the course of preparing 'Decision-Making Tools for Events' I re-reviewed a lot of literature on "value of events"—especially for downtowns. One of the (now ironic) pieces of advice for committees in evaluating potential events is to avoid quick-and-dirty decisions (such as the HIN item) and instead to actually do *analysis* of the potential for the events.

One mistake is choosing "go" too hastily. The opposite mistake is choosing "no" too hastily. A lot of value can be lost either way.

B. Seeing the HIN Action Item on the Agenda

Upon seeing the HIN Action Item on the agenda a few days prior to the PBID meeting I developed the following plan:

1. Because there had been no discussion of it at the Marketing Committee, I was concerned when I saw that the "HIN Action Item" was on the board agenda

a) I very much wanted a fair discussion of this very valuable event to be occurring

b) I planned to address the HIN Action Item DURING the agenda item for that—in accordance with PBID protocol for public comments.

(1) I decided that I would not, out of respect for the PBID protocol, address the "HIN" item during the Public Comment period.

(2) I very much regret that now. By not doing that I ended up with effectively no chance to speak on the topic at all.

2. Also I would complete the first of two documents, "EVENTS: Value and Decision Making" (outline), and hand that out during Public Comment as something for the Marketing Committee to hopefully utilize.

a) There were two items on the Agenda for which this document was relevant: The Marketing Committee goals; and the HIN item

b) I did not need to go into detail on the "EVENTS…" document; just simply offer it for use at & by the Marketing Committee.

II. At the PBID Board Meeting

A. Public Comment

1. During Public Comment I was allowed to quickly offer my document ("Events…" outline) to the board and Lorena noted that it could be discussed at the Marketing meeting

a) I chose, out of respect for PBID protocol, to not ask to address the HIN item during Public Comment

b) But as it developed, the meeting did not go well for my respectful plan to wait for the Agenda Item

2. Things began to go haywire regarding HIN—the damning-slamming "over-the-top" killing of the event began

a) A gentleman asked to do Public Comment on HIN

(1) I have seen him a couple times before, but don't recall his name

b) The chair began by saying it should wait until that agenda item. But then said ~ oh, why not, go ahead

(1) This should have been put into that agenda item instead of in Public Comment

c) As the gentleman began speaking it became clear that he had a pre-written statement; reading from, but not handed out

(1) His statement was clearly intended to forcefully persuade, not to discuss or to actually evaluate

The Public Comment intended to totally smear-kill HIN

(2) He intended to do his best to kill the event

(3) He read a list of things that one after the other appeared to be increasingly damning of the event

(4) His tone, tenor, exaggerations, mischaracterizations, over-the-top, basically nasty, maligning, aggressive, strident, not quite belligerent, delivery characteristic of today's grievance culture and victim society should have been a little warning to the board that this is not really the kind of communication that the board members want to deal with

(a) This kind of communication is very often intended to intimidate and to serve as an implicit threat of further vociferous and more publicly expressed anger

(b) It's also a kind of 'shock-and-awe' aggressive tactic to reduce the chances of anyone else (such as the actual organizers and others) to defend themselves and the event

(5) The board should have said "ok, we heard you; and now 'wait a minute'" and "we need to hear from the other side, including the organizers"

(a) Suppose PBID itself were smeared by this kind of nasty Public Comment tactic to some other organization (eg, an NC); would not PBID want to be given a chance to defend itself?

d) In the face of this kind of over-aggressive communication against a third party, that is not present and has no chance to defend itself, some questions should be asked:

(1) What exactly are the motives of the gentleman ? What exactly is his agenda?

(a) Are they actually about helping to make Downtown San Pedro a better place?

(b) Or something more of a personal agenda? Or something else?

(2) Was he accusing anyone of doing something to him?

(a) Other than he clearly took offense to it?

(b) Was he saying that he was a victim of the HIN event?

(3) Does his residential situation have something to do with being personally against street events in general in Downtown San Pedro?

(4) He had appeared at PBID a month or two prior to the May meeting. His complaint at that time was not about HIN. I'm not recalling exactly what it was but I'm thinking that it was something related to him being personally inconvenienced by something.

(a) My recollection is that he also has complained about Dia de Las Muertes.

(b) If that is true, and I'm pretty sure it is, then does PBID really want to bow to his "demands". [Noting that his Public Comment was essentially a "demand".]

B. HIN Action-Agenda Item

1. The gentleman's comment was given during start-of-the-meeting Public Comment. And then some time was spent on the other Agenda items.

2. My thinking at the time the HIN Action Item began was that there would be some reasonability or hesitation to just be negative on the part of most of the board members.

a) After all, these are people who are not often bull-dozed, bum-rushed or intimidated by such aggressive presentations.

3. I was first surprised by the procedure of 'everyone make a comment'. I don't recall seeing that on the PBID board before. Usually the discussion is for anyone who has something to say to say it; but without the 'everyone comment' procedure.

4. And then as each member in turn made some negative comment I was, by the time it ended, rather stunned. Like "What just happened here?" Wow!!

5. There was no offer of "discussion". And I had to make a choice in the moment at the end of the table-go-round whether to ask to say something or just be quiet.

a) In the face of the tarring, feathering, lynching, and killing that had just occurred, I decided in the instant that for me to say anything at that time would be to just make a bad situation worse by challenging what had seemingly become a little momentary mob mentality.

b) I was stunned that not a single board member said something like 'wait a minute' 'there's something not quite right about this'.

6. My impressions of the comments by the board members include:

a) I'm not recalling anyone who was 'emotionally' "against" the event; or who seemed "angry" about it

b) My impression of the comments is that most were in the view of "pass on this" and rather mild negatives

c) My impression-guess is that not even half of the board members had actually been to the event

d) My impression-guess is that there was a substantial "go-along" component at play

e) My impression is that the initial Public Comment was their primary source of 'information' about the event

f) My impression is that the Public Comment at the beginning of the meeting polluted their thinking

7. There was no question asked at the end of the table-go-round such as "does anyone have anything different to say about the event?"

a) There was no 'opening' for public comment on that topic.

b) The round-the-table comments were made, the vote was taken, the agenda item was 'done'.

c) I or anyone else at the meeting would have had to 'interrupt' to be able to say anything.

(1) Such as "Could you please include this topic in the Marketing meeting?"

(2) That is what I wanted to say.

(3) But without me being rude, disrespectful and interruptive, there was no opportunity to do that.

(4) I chose in the moment to 'think about it' and 'digest what had just happened'.

8. I departed that meeting rather stunned without talking to anyone about it

III. After the PBID Board Meeting

1. After the PBID Meeting

During the week after the PBID meeting I just let the situation settle in my mind to decide later to see if I might want to just let it all go.

a) Neighborhood Council meeting

After the end of the Neighborhood Council meeting this past Tuesday (May 10), the topics of events in Downtown San Pedro, and the new car show on July 16, came up and the HIN event was mentioned. I then described what had happened at the PBID meeting.

IV. Next

A. Overall State of the Situation

1. In my opinion the way the HIN Action Item was handled was neither thoughtful nor fair—to those of us who wanted to be heard on the item; to the organizers; to PBID itself as a rational, smart, sophisticated, fair and value-creating decision-making body; and to

the San Pedro community members and sub-communities who would benefit, and did the last two years, from the event

2. Personally I am sad about this situation

B. Previous Plan

1. My plan for the May PBID meeting in relation to the HIN agenda item had been to offer public comment during that discussion as follows:

a) There are two parts to the document I just handed out during general Public Comment:

(1) The first part is the outline for general decision making about events in the "EVENTS: Value and Decision Making" document (8 pages)

(2) The second part is a matrix-spreadsheet for specific events [like HIN] that evaluates an event in relation to the general criteria in the outline

b) My plan was to ask the board to put the HIN item into the May Marketing Committee meeting

(1) So that I could provide a spreadsheet-scoring assessment of it for that meeting

(2) And so that it could be discussed there

c) I thought this was a good plan that reflected and respected PBID protocols, procedures, people and Downtown San Pedro community

(1) I still think it was a respectful and fair plan

C. Current Plan

1. For the next Marketing Committee meeting I plan to present a spreadsheet example showing DDLM and HIN using this rational and thoughtful decision-making tool.

V. Brief Notes About the HIN Event

A. HIN is a very well established, and well respected, worldwide event (as can be seen from their website)

B. San Pedro has been a strong, enduring representative and location of "Car Culture"

1. Car shows occur routinely and regularly occur in San Pedro (viz, Cars & Stripes, Pt Fermin, and others)

C. HIN is <u>today's</u> version of older-generation car shows

1. There has always been young-adult music, culture and pin-ups of the day

D. HIN is <u>MAINSTREAM</u> car culture: again, HIN is THE "car culture" of today

1. HIN is not 'your grandfather's' car show

a) San Pedro already has those—that is a nice base (that is slowly being eroded)

b) San Pedro needs ALSO 'your grandson's' car show

E. HIN is NOT "renegade" or "outlaw" car culture

F. My understanding and recollection is that at HIN there were ZERO Police incidents[1]

1. This is in major contrast to what happens weekly and routinely on 6th St in the 300 block (please refer back to very opening sentence of this letter)[2]

G. Many other points to be made about the HIN event; I will do that for the next Marketing Committee meeting in the systematic analysis of HIN and DDLM.

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[1] This can be, and arguably should have been, easily checked with the Police.

[2] Should not PBID be getting monthly incident reports (public safety calls, not just crimes and arrests) that would show clearly what are the actual problems on 6th St? Shouldn't this data be made public to the Downtown San Pedro community?